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**From:** Shore, Berry  
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**Subject:** PFOA/PFOS Clips

## **State pays Newburgh upfront for aqueduct water**

Oct. 1, 2016

MidHudson News.com

NEWBURGH – The state Department of Environmental Conservation made good on its promise to pay for the City of Newburgh’s use of New York City aqueduct water while a filtration system has been built and installed in its own water source, Washington Lake. That source has been shut down because of the presence of the carcinogenic chemical PFOS.

Newburgh Comptroller Katie Mack told the city council the state has written a check to the city for the \$2.4 million cost of aqueduct water.

“That is sitting in an account and we did make our first payment in June, which was approximately \$400,000,” Mack said. “We will receive July and August over the next couple of months and at the end of the last payment we will reimburse for all of those expenditures and then we will just put it right back into the same fund and keep using those revolving funds from now until the end of next year.”

Since the primary source of the PFOS has been determined to have come from the New York Air National Guard base at Stewart Airport, it is expected that the remediation will be paid for by the federal and state governments.

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## **Four backup wells on joint base tainted by PFOA, PFOS; rest come up clean**

By Kristina Scala, staff writer

Sep 30, 2016

Burlington County Times

Part of the Unwell Water Series on PFOS/PFOA Water Contamination

Over the past two years, 16 public wells and about 140 private wells have been shut down by contamination from perfluorooctanoic acid and perfluorooctane sulfonate. The former Naval Air Warfare Center in Warminster and former Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base in Horsham, along with the active Horsham Air Guard Station, are thought to be the source of the taint.

This news organization has been investigating and writing extensively on the topic, telling the stories of local people who believe they've been sickened by the chemicals, speaking with health experts on the potential toxicity of the chemicals, and examining the actions taken by local, state and federal agencies as they address the contamination.

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**JOINT BASE MCGUIRE-DIX-LAKEHURST** — Joint base officials announced Thursday that at least four shallow wells on the installation contained some level of unregulated chemicals found in firefighting foam, while several others were untainted by years of chemical releases.

The four shallow backup wells on the Lakehurst section of the base contain levels of perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) and perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) that are below the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's lifetime health advisory level of 70 parts per trillion.

The exact results of the shallow well testing were not available as of Friday.

Other testing found that samples taken from the main systems on the McGuire and Lakehurst sections contain no detectable contamination, according to base spokesman Sgt. Chris Powell.

The main water system on Dix was previously sampled under the EPA's Unregulated Contaminant Monitoring 3 Rule and found no signs of PFOS and PFOA.

Additional testing to several other shallow systems on Dix is scheduled for late October, Powell said.

Military installations nationwide, including the joint base, used and practiced with firefighting foam to suppress gasoline-induced fires. And like many other bases, releases of hundreds of thousands of gallons of foam, which contains PFOS and PFOA, have occurred in the last 50 years.

Despite the foam seeping into the groundwater and soil at the base, officials said the chemical commonly found in the fire suppressant did not make its way into main public drinking water systems there.

Because the chemical, unregulated by the state and federal government, has contaminated drinking water systems elsewhere in the country, the Air Force, EPA and New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection have taken steps to ensure contamination has not spread to drinking water systems on and off the base.

Under a directive from the Air Force, 17 public drinking water systems on the joint base in August began to determine if the releases have tainted the systems serving residents and employees.

The results, released Thursday, were of eight systems on McGuire and Lakehurst, including the four backup wells that tested positive for PFOA and PFOS.

Meanwhile, a DEP advisory panel recommended this month that the state agency set a maximum contaminant level of 14 parts per trillion to replace a 40-ppt limit originally recommended in 2007. It has yet to be adopted.

It's a stricter level that some water conservation advocates say needed to be enforced years ago.

To date, a maximum contaminant level for PFOA has not been established in New Jersey, and the recommended limit of 40 ppt was set as a lifetime drinking water guidance for PFOA, according to DEP spokesman Bob Considine.

Prior to the military directive, joint base officials stressed that testing was not required for drinking water systems since all 17 on the base serve less than the EPA's population threshold.

Last year, preliminary testing found four on-base sites with groundwater and soil contamination. An additional 30 sites were also identified as locations where firefighting foam had been released.

A company has since been hired by the Department of Defense to conduct soil and groundwater testing at 21 sites.

Curtis Frye, chief of the joint base's Environmental Restoration Program, said in August that the 21 sites are among 30 identified as locations where firefighting foam had been released. The sites adjacent to one another were merged prior to the start of testing.

Frye said about 60 percent of the groundwater and soil sampling on the base was complete as of August, with the last samples expected to be finished by the end of October along with the public water systems.

The results of that testing, which began in September, will determine the extent of PFOS and PFOA contamination and if further testing off the base is needed.

DEP officials previously said public and private water wells near the joint base have not yet been tested, as on-base investigations are still in process. However, they previously expressed confidence that the supplies are not at risk of contamination.

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## **State pays for Bennington water line design as company balks**

Sep. 29, 2016, 4:28 pm by

Bennington Banner

BENNINGTON — The state will pay \$2 million to complete the final design of a project that would extend public water lines to homes affected by the pollutant PFOA. And local legislators say they plan to file a bill that would make individuals who contaminate drinking water with the substance liable for paying.

The state's Department of Environmental Conservation will pay for the final design of a water line extension project because Saint-Gobain, the company the DEC believes is responsible for the contamination, has not committed to pay for the costs, according to DEC Commissioner Alyssa Schuren.

"They are not moving as quickly as you want or that we are," Schuren told attendees of a community meeting at Bennington College on Wednesday night. "We haven't given up hope, but we need to pick up the pace."

Schuren said the multinational company was a "good partner" early on and paid for

bottled water, water testing and filter systems. But she described frustration that talks between DEC and the company stalled in the last couple of months.

Alyssa Schuren is commissioner of environmental conservation.

“We will continue to work to hold the company responsible and ultimately have them reimburse the state for those costs,” Schuren said.

Schuren said talks between the DEC and Saint-Gobain have resumed and meetings are scheduled in the coming weeks.

The project was pegged to cost at least \$32 million, and Schuren said it could rise to \$40 million.

It’s a matter of who’s going to pick up the tab, said state Sen. Dick Sears, D-Bennington. The North Bennington resident and former Bennington Select Board member said his constituents need clean drinking water.

“If we can’t do it through negotiations, we can do it through legislation,” Sears said.

Sears and state Sen. Brian Campion, D-Bennington, said they are working on new legislation that would make people liable for PFOA contamination in private wells. The senators said a bill they plan to file this winter would require individuals to pay costs associated with extending municipal water lines to affected homes, if they released the chemical into the environment.

“Our goal is to make our communities whole,” Campion said. “I think all of our concerns is that this could go on and on.”

Over 60 residents and state and local officials attended the community meeting in the Tishman Auditorium at Bennington College. It was the latest of several held since PFOA, a man-made chemical once used to make Teflon, was found in private wells around North Bennington in February. Known as perfluorooctanoic acid, or C8, it's been linked to cancers and other diseases.

Since then, the DEC has been sampling private wells to determine just how far the contamination has spread in groundwater.

"It took us months to figure out the full extent of the problem, and I think we're finally there," said Chuck Schwer, director of the DEC's Waste Management and Prevention Division.

Schwer said 541 samples have been taken from private wells in seven months. Of those, 266 had PFOA in amounts higher than 20 parts per trillion, the state's limit. Contractors installed 244 "point-of-entry" systems on private wells, and 11 more will be online soon.

The state began re-sampling wells after Saint-Gobain did not meet DEC's September deadline to start those efforts, Schwer said.

Shannon Tatro, public health nurse and supervisor with the state Department of Health, said two more blood clinics will be held: Nov. 14 from 1 to 8 p.m., and Nov. 15 from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m., at the DOH office at 324 Main St.

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**More testing looms in aftermath of tainted tap water:** ASSEMBLYMAN Gottfried:  
Small communities often can't afford testing

By JOE MAHONEY CNHI State Reporter

Sep 28, 2016

Press Republican

ALBANY — A string of water-pollution incidents blamed on industrial chemicals is prompting calls for more money to detect whether New Yorkers are exposed to unregulated but "emerging" contaminants from their faucets.

Assemblyman Richard Gottfried (D-Manhattan), chairman of the Assembly Health Committee, said in an interview that he hopes there will be "more funding for expanded investigation of possible contamination" in next year's budget.

The influential architect of many of the health-related programs advanced at the Capitol said money is needed because small communities often cannot afford testing.

"And millions of New Yorkers get their water from either very small systems or from private wells," he said.

## NOT REGULATED

Gottfried and a group of other lawmakers recently led a series of hearings dealing with water-system contamination in Hoosick Falls, Newburgh and Westhampton Beach in Suffolk County.

The main contaminant in Hoosick Falls — with a water system that serves 3,500 residents — is perfluorooctanoic acid, a chemical used in making non-stick materials such as Teflon.

In Newburgh, a city of 29,000 people, elevated levels of perfluorooctane sulfonate, a related chemical used for making firefighting foam, have been discovered in Washington Lake, the community's reservoir.

In Westhampton Beach, perfluorooctane sulfonate was found in the groundwater this



year near Francis S. Gabreski Airport, and state officials also suspect firefighting foam as the cause.

Both chemicals, state officials said, are among more than 80,000 contaminants not regulated by the EPA. The agency regulates fewer than 100 toxins linked to water pollution.

## SUPERFUND SITES

Contaminants of "emerging concern" are defined by regulators as those that have not been historically part of water regulation but have escaped into the environment from commercial and industrial activities.

Gabreski Airport, Stewart Air National Guard Base in Newburgh and the area around the Saint-Gobain plastics plant in Hoosick Falls have all been declared state Superfund sites in recent weeks. The designation gives the state clout to pressure suspected polluters to pay for cleanup.

In the wake of the hearings, lawmakers are also expected to call for more intensive reviews of water-supply reports so there can be a swifter response to contamination, said Assembly Environmental Conservation Chairman Steve Englebright (D-Suffolk County).

"We're going to have to codify much of our activity with an eye on what the feds are doing — but not waiting for them," he said.

## PORUS PROTECTION

The environmental group Riverkeeper was among the first to draw attention to the pollution in Newburgh. Its water-quality program manager, Dan Shapley, said that while state and federal laws already have strong water-quality protections, the system for protecting the public from toxic chemicals is porous.

Current technology is only capable of detecting "small fraction of emerging contaminants," he said.

"We have a real problem in our country with regulating chemicals," Shapley said. "We assume they are innocent until proven guilty. That allows a lot of guilty chemicals to enter into our environment and into our bodies for long periods of time."

Federal rules now require water systems with more than 10,000 people to test for unregulated contaminants. Gov. Andrew Cuomo this month urged federal officials to change the rule so that the 2.5 million New Yorkers who get drinking water from smaller systems have the same protection.

#### 'LAGGING BEHIND'

In addition, Cuomo last week channeled \$5 million to the State University at Stony Brook to develop new filtration technologies to improve drinking-water and wastewater treatment.

But Gottfried, along with Assemblyman Steve McLaughlin (R-Rensselaer County) whose district includes Hoosick Falls, said New York should step up now to protect smaller water systems, in case the federal government is slow to change its rules.

Both lawmakers said the state should consider new standards for PFOA contamination that are more stringent than the federal government's.

Vermont, California and New Jersey have already taken such a step.

"We are lagging behind while claiming to be this big, progressive state," McLaughlin said.

## REPRODUCTIVE TOXICITY

A spokesman for the State Department of Health, James Plastiras, said his agency is adhering to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's guidance on PFOA and PFOS contamination.

"Unregulated and emerging contaminants are a national issue, and we believe there should be a national standard for these chemicals," he said.

California last week listed both chemicals as known causes of "reproductive toxicity."

Last month, New Jersey officials announced they would lower the allowed level of PFOA in drinking water from 40 parts per trillion to 14. The latest EPA guidance is 70 parts per trillion.

Gottfried also said the state should use a cancer registry maintained by the Health Department to help identify areas that may not yet know the water is contaminated.

"If there is a higher-than-expected concentration of cancers in a given geographic area, it doesn't prove there is an environmental cause," he said. "But it certainly suggests you ought to look."

## ALTERNATE SYSTEMS

While the Hoosick Falls water — with a new filtration system paid for by Saint-Gobain — has been proclaimed safe to drink, concerns over the health effects of years of contamination have not abated.

This week, Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand (D-New York) called on the EPA to conduct a public health assessment in the village near the Vermont border and not far from Troy.

Meanwhile, New York officials have already executed agreements that hold Saint-Gobain and Honeywell, which also operated factories in the area, responsible for the PFOA contamination, Plastiras said.

Those agreements require the companies to determine the full scope of the contamination at four Honeywell and two Saint-Gobain plants, and to look into the feasibility of alternative water supply systems.

#### 'NOT BLUE-COLLAR LIFESTYLE'

The PFOA contamination in Hoosick Falls was first confirmed, not by state or federal regulators, but by a resident, Mike Hickey, whose father, John, died from kidney cancer in 2013 at age 68. He'd retired from the Saint-Gobain plant just two years earlier.

Hickey said he had the water tested the following year, when a neighbor, math teacher Isabel McGuire, died from melanoma. She was 48.

"A lot of times the polluters blame the blue-collar lifestyle for these cancer deaths near their plants," said Hickey. "But my father didn't drink, and he didn't smoke, and there was no rhyme or reason for him to become sick like he was."

An insurance underwriter, Hickey questioned whether the recent legislative hearings accomplished much, other than embarrassing some bureaucrats for not having warned Hoosick Falls residents sooner of high PFOA levels.

He said lawmakers should focus on getting polluters to pay for blood testing and filtration systems needed to purify the water.

#### 'MORE CONTAMINANTS'

Hickey said he was pleased to learn that state officials are now pushing for regular testing of contaminants at smaller water systems, as well.

"They may not find PFOA or PFOS, but there are going to be additional contaminants out there because upstate New York has been industrialized for so long," he said.  
"Hopefully, we can learn something from all this."

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